



Congressman Mike Simpson



Senior Newsletter

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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

By Ellie McKinnon, OLLI Director

Imagine university level courses without the stress of exams, without the commitment to papers and projects. Just learning for the pure joy of it and doing so at a reasonable price. Imagine Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Boise State University designed for intellectually curious adults for whom stretching the mind is a favorite form of exercise. This program started 5 years ago with the name Renaissance Institute, features short, collegiate level non-credit classes and lectures taught by university faculty and community experts. Lecturers and classes are drawn from across the disciplines and presented in facilities that provide appropriate accommodations for a learning community -often in places that complement the topic of the presentation.

The Flicks Theaters is a favorite location for the Institute, and classes have been offered in the Legislative Chambers at the Capitol, the World Center for Birds of Prey, the Hispanic Cultural Center, the Simplot Performing Arts Academy, The Boise Art Museum, the Idaho History Museum, the Idaho Water Center and the Basque History and Cultural Center. Some courses have associated field trips or are taught entirely on the road or on site in a different location. A physics class took Institute members to Twin Falls to Study the sun via the Centennial Telescope and the

stars at the Faulkner Planetarium. A geology course field trip found members discovering geologic formations along the Oregon/Idaho Border.

The Institute, designed for intellectually curious adults has both a fall and a spring season and is open all mature adult learners. The costs are kept low to keep the learning opportunity affordable; \$35 buys a season of lectures and the opportunity to register for Institute classes which are also reasonably priced. This year the Institute received generous grant from the Bernhard Osher Foundation. Granted \$100,000 to expand the Institute with that fund renewable for two more years, OLLI has set a



goal of 500 active members by 2010. If the program is able to maintain its tradition of excellence in programming and reach the membership goal within three years, then the

program is eligible for consideration for a million dollar endowment. More information about current and upcoming seasons is available by calling the division of Extended Studies at 426-2047. The program also maintains a website at: www.boisestate.edu/extendedstudies/osher.

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This Mother's Day, Show Someone You Love How Much You Care—By Jeanne Tyler, SS Public Affairs Specialist, Boise

On Mother's Day, we celebrate the special people in our lives. There are a number of ways you can show someone you love how much you care. So consider doing something for them that can really make a difference. Show them how to get extra help with their Medicare prescription drug costs.

The high cost of medicine can be a burden on your loved ones who have limited income and resources. Extra help — available through Social Security — can pay part of their monthly premiums, annual deductibles and prescription co-payments. The extra help could be worth an average of \$3,700 per year.

To figure out if they're eligible, Social Security needs to know your loved one's income and the value of their savings, investments and real estate (other than the home they live in). To qualify for the extra help, your loved one must be receiving Medicare and have:

Income limited to \$15,315 for an individual or \$20,535 for a married couple living together. Even if their annual income is higher, your loved ones still may be able to get some help with monthly premiums, annual deductibles and prescription co-payments. Some examples where income may be higher include if they or their spouse:

- Support other family members who live with them;
- Have earnings from work; or
- Live in Alaska or Hawaii; and

- Resources limited to \$11,710 for an individual or \$23,410 for a married couple living together. Resources include such things as bank accounts, stocks and bonds. We do not count their house and car as resources.

Social Security has an easy-to-use online application that anyone — family members, friends and caregivers — can complete. You can find it at www.socialsecurity.gov. To apply by phone or get an application, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) and ask for the Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs (SSA-1020). Or go to the nearest Social Security office.

To learn more about the Medicare prescription drug plans and special enrollment periods, visit www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227; TTY 1-877-486-2048).

So this Mother's Day, give someone you love something special: the peace of mind that comes with knowing extra help is available with Medicare prescription drug costs. Then go one step further —



Could You Find Your Living Will if You Needed It in a Crisis?

Idahoans have a new opportunity to communicate their wishes about medical care when they place their living will and durable power of attorney for health care - advance directives - in the *Idaho Health Care Directive Registry*. Located in the office of the Idaho Secretary of State, it offers peace of mind and easy access to your wishes for care at the end of life. When your documents are available in the *Idaho Health Care Directive Registry* there will be no need for you or your family members to frantically search through file cabinets or safety deposit boxes during a medical emergency. For more information and an application form, go to <http://www.idsos.state.id.us/> or call (208) 332-2814 and request a packet of material. Advance directive documents are available at no cost at

www.abetterwaycoalition.org



Diabetes—Things You Should Know

Over 9 million women in the U.S. have diabetes. And 3 million of them don't even know it!

Did you know?

- Women with diabetes are more likely to have a heart attack and have it at a younger age.
- Some women get diabetes when they are pregnant.
- Women who have diabetes are more likely to have a miscarriage or a baby with birth defects.
- Women with diabetes, according to recent studies are more likely to be poor, which makes it harder to manage the disease.
- Most people with diabetes die from heart attack or stroke.

What is diabetes?

- It is a disease that changes the way your body uses food. The food you eat turns to sugar. The sugar then travels through the blood to all parts of the body. Normally, insulin helps get sugar from the blood to the body's cells, where it is used for energy.
- When you have diabetes, your body has trouble making and/or using insulin. So your body does not get the fuel it needs. And your blood sugar stays too high.

What are the types of diabetes?

Type 1 --The body does not make any insulin. People with type 1 must take insulin every day to stay alive.

Type 2 --The body does not make enough insulin, or use insulin well. Most people with diabetes have type 2.

Are you at risk for diabetes?

- Do you need to lose weight?
- Do you get little or no exercise?
- Do you have high blood pressure (130/80 or higher)?
- Do you have a brother or sister with diabetes?
- Do you have a parent with diabetes?
- Are you a woman who had it when you were pregnant. OR have you had a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds at birth?
- Are you African American, Native American, Hispanic, or Asian American/Pacific Islander?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you need a diabetes test.

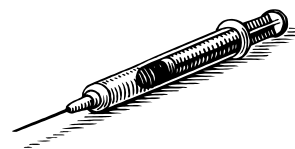
What are the warning signs?

- Going to the bathroom a lot
- Feeling hungry or thirsty all the time
- Blurred vision
- Losing weight without trying

- Cuts or bruises that are slow to heal

- Feeling tired all the time

- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet



Most people with diabetes do not notice any signs

What can I do if I have diabetes?

Watch What You Eat and Get Exercise

- There is no one diet for people with diabetes. Work with your health care team to come up with a plan for you.
- You can eat the foods you love by watching serving sizes. The "Nutrition Facts" label on foods can help. Many packaged foods contain more than 1 serving.
- Carbohydrates raise your blood sugar the most. Cut back on these. For example bread, cereal, rice, and pasta.
- Be active at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week. Exercise helps your body's insulin work better. It also lowers your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

Use Medicines Wisely

- Sometimes people with diabetes need to take pills or insulin shots. Be sure to follow the directions.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist what your medicines do. Also ask when to take them and if they have any side effects.

Check Your Blood Sugar and Know Your ABCs

- Help prevent heart disease and stroke by keeping your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol under control.
- Check your blood sugar using a meter (home testing kit). This tells what your blood sugar is so you can make wise choices.
- Ask your doctor for an A-1-C ("A-one-see") blood test. It measures blood sugar levels over 2 to 3 months.
- Talk to your health care team about your ABC's:
 - A-1-C
 - Blood pressure
 - Cholesterol

To learn more:

Contact the [American Diabetes Association](http://www.AmericanDiabetesAssociation.org)
1-800-342-2383 (1-800-Diabetes)

Do you know someone who would like to receive the Senior Newsletter?

**E-mail Fran Symms at
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